

IV.—*On the Peregrine Falcon from Sardinia.* By R. BOWDLER SHARPE, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., Senior Assistant, Zoological Department, British Museum.

FOR the last two years I have been endeavouring to show that, owing to the insulated position of our native land, a tendency to vary from the continental forms exhibits itself more or less in all our resident birds; and that this will be found to be more and more the case I am firmly convinced, if ornithologists will view the matter calmly and endeavour to get together good series for comparison. Great difficulty exists to some minds in believing that our insular forms do really vary; and this scepticism is the more curious because, if we had been considering the avifauna of some distant land, every one would have *expected*, rather than otherwise, that an island lying off the coast of a large continent would possess a more or less modified fauna: but the difficulty consists in recognizing the fact after it has been ignored for nearly a century by every English writer on birds; and I have been called to task by several ornithological friends because, as I contend, I refuse to disbelieve the evidence of my own eyesight, which proves to me the distinctness of some of the British birds from their continental relations. What I do maintain is, that ornithologists commit an error in applying to our English birds the titles which Linnaeus bestowed upon his *Swedish* species. Whether the birds which I have from time to time named with Mr. Dresser will ultimately be recognized as distinct species, or will merely be considered climatic races or subspecies, the future will decide; but as long as those differences exist it will be wrong to affix "Linnaeus" as the namer of birds he never saw.

It is with regard to the differences exhibited in a like degree by the avifauna of Sardinia that I have been led to make the above remarks; and I believe that the latter island will be found to contain a modified fauna from that of the mainland. We know that it contains a species of Warbler almost, if not quite, peculiar to itself. So nearly does *Sylvia melanocephala* resemble the true *Melizophilus sardus* in some of its plumages, that I have reason to believe that it has often been mistaken for it. I myself have never seen an example of the latter bird from any other locality but Sardinia; nor do I know any one else who has done so. Until the fact of its wandering is clearly proved, therefore, I think we may look upon *S. sarda* as peculiar to the island of Sardinia; and we may expect from this to find other modifications in its avifauna. My friend Mr. A. Basil Brooke has lately lent me two

Falcons from Sardinia which can hardly be any thing but a new species; for they differ from every other Peregrine which I have ever seen from Europe, and more closely approach the southern forms *F. melanogenys* and *F. nigriceps*. The Sardinian birds, however, differ from these as well as the common Peregrine in the very strongly marked oval or tear-shaped spots on the chest, and the very broad and closely marked bars on the breast. They approach *F. melanogenys* in having a greater extent of black on the ear-coverts, which nearly meets the cheek-stripe along the whole of its length. Both specimens are fully adult females, and agree entirely; they were shot by Mr. Brooke in April 1869 and April 1871 respectively. I have no doubt that the characters above mentioned will be found to be constant, and therefore propose to describe the Sardinian bird as

Falco Brookei, sp. n.

F. similis F. peregrino, sed statura paullo minore, facie laterali tota nigricante, et pectore latissime nigro transfasciato distinguendus.

Hab. Sardinia (*A. B. Brooke*).

Mr. Brooke has very kindly presented one of the typical specimens to the national collection; so that the species can be examined by any one visiting the British Museum. The measurements of *F. Brookei* (in skin) as compared with *F. peregrinus* are as follows:—

	Long. tot.	culm.	alæ.	caudæ.	tarsi.
<i>F. peregrinus</i> , ♀ ad.....	19·0	1·45	13·8	7·6	2·15
<i>F. Brookei</i> , ♀ ad.....	17·0	1·35	13·5	7·0	2·00

V.—Notes on the Longicorn Coleoptera of Tropical America.

By H. W. BATES, Esq., F.L.S.

Subfamily RHINOTRAGINÆ.

The “groupes,” corresponding to our subfamilies, under which Lacordaire classed the genera of Longicorns, and of which he established about eighty in the family Cerambycidae alone, are seldom distinguished by definite group-characters. The rule seems to be that in each “groupe” modifications of form appear which do not occur in the same conjunction in any other; but every single modification is liable to disappear in some members of the “groupe.” Thus there is a looseness and uncertainty of definition in the classification of this family which cannot be agreeable to rigid systematists; but they are